

How to Establish S.M.A.R.T Goals

S.M.A.R.T goals don't just fall from the sky, they are the result of good planning and understanding some basic principles of goal-setting:

- 1) Everyone involved in goal-setting must agree on what key words mean in the goal statements. Confusion often results when good operational definitions of terminology are absent.
- 2) Good goals are measurable, but not everything that is measurable is suitable as a goal. Frequently, measures are used because they are easy to obtain not because they are the best indicators of performance. Make sure the measure accurately reflects the efforts of those performing the activity.
- 3) Unrealistic goals create **demotivation** for employees. Setting unattainable targets make supervisors appear either out of touch or ignorant. Setting too many goals often has the same effect.
- 4) Goals should be aligned to larger organizational objectives. Arbitrary or capricious targets discourage employee buy-in. This can usually be overcome by involving those charged with reaching goals in the planning and goal-setting processes.
- 5) Just about everyone appreciates clear communication regarding the time they are allotted to complete activities, as long as the amount provided seems realistic and doesn't conflict with other deadlines.